

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
June 23, 2015

CALL TO ORDER: 6:32 p.m.

INVOCATION: Reverend Randy Scott – Pentecostals of South Lake

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Mrs. Miano and Mr. Widing were absent. All other members were present.

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, REMONSTRATIONS:

There were two presentations as follows:

Mr. Tom Easterly, IDEM Commissioner, spoke regarding the Indiana Clean Community Challenge. The program recognizes and rewards Indiana cities, towns, and counties for proactively managing environmental impacts associated with governmental operation. IDEM provided recognition to the Town of Merrillville as one of Indiana's clean communities. There are currently 11 cities in the program and Merrillville will be the 4th Town that is recognized as being a clean community. A plaque was presented to the Town of Merrillville as well as signs to display within the community as recognition of this achievement.

Dr. Vernon Smith, Indiana State Representative, discussed the latest 2015 State Legislation session. Dr. Smith provided a hand out with all active bills from this last legislative session and briefly touched on various bills that may be of interest to the town. Some discussion followed.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Approval of the Accounts Payable Register Voucher dated June 23, 2015. Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of June 9, 2015. Mr. Pettit made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mrs. Barron. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

BUDGET & FINANCE: Mr. Pettit had no report.

PUBLIC WORKS:

Mr. Spann mentioned that the street patching continues. Mr. Spires said that we recently started to spray for mosquitos, weather conditions impact when we are able to spray.

COUNCIL AFFAIRS:

Mr. Hardaway requested that the town review the City of Crown Point's grass cutting ordinance for occupied resident homes and set aside time for a future discussion.

PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS: Mr. Pettit had no report.

PUBLIC SAFETY: Mr. Widing was absent, no report.

PARKS & RECREATION: Mrs. Miano was absent, no report.

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS:

Mr. Lake said he received correspondence with concerns related to the trash rack located at 73rd & Taney. Mr. Lake requested that the Lake County Surveyor's office remove the trash rack or possibly use a different design to avoid blockage of a large amount of debris. Mr. Lake mentioned that Calumet Park Cemetery is requesting to know who is responsible for the maintenance of Kaiser Ditch, and he responded the pond's responsibility is that of the Lake County's Surveyor's office. Mr. Lake went on to provide additional Stormwater updates.

ELECTIONS & PUBLIC RELATIONS: Mrs. Miano was absent, no report.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Mr. Pettit had no report.

UTILITY LIAISON: Mrs. Barron had no report.

ABANDONED PROPERTIES:

Mr. Hardaway made a motion to amend the agenda to add ordinance 15-16 on the first reading. It was seconded by Mr. Spann. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Hardaway went on to thank those who attended the Building One America round table discussion. He looks forward to working with the different communities within the region as an effort to gain additional knowledge of best practices on how to handle blighted properties.

GENERAL ORDERS:

FIRST READING ORDINANCES:

Ord. 15-15: An ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, providing that the Zoning Ordinance be amended by establishing the Fourth Amendment to Century Plaza Planned Unit Development for revision of interior access roads and private drives from “outlot” tracts and creating Tract 18 for future commercial development. Mr. Pettit made a motion to approve the ordinance and was seconded by Mr. Hardaway. There was no discussion. The motion carried by a 5-0 roll call vote.

Ord. 15-16: An ordinance of the Town Council of the Town of Merrillville, Indiana to establish a vacant building registration and maintenance program. Discussion followed regarding the need for further review of the ordinance from town council before final adoption. Mr. Hardaway made a motion to approve the ordinance and was seconded by Mr. Pettit. There was no further discussion. The motion carried by a 5-0 roll call vote.

SECOND READING ORDINANCES: None

RESOLUTIONS: None

BZA ACTIONS:

Petitioner: Minika Johnson
Owner: Paul Surowiec
Request: Special exception approval
Purpose: For a Child Day Care Facility having 17 or more children
Location: 7897 Taft St (formerly known as the Promenade Hall)
Zoning: C-3, Highway Commercial
Case #: Z18E6-0515
Conditions: Pending Approval from the Town of Merrillville’s Fire Inspector
For this petitioner only at this location only for this use only.

Mr. Hardaway made a motion to approve with the conditions and was seconded by Mrs. Barron. Some discussion followed. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

Petitioner: DVG, Inc.
Owner: 1550 East 81st Avenue Merrillville LLC
Request: Special exception approval
Purpose: For a proposed restaurant(s) to be located on lots 2 & 3 in the Mississippi addition subdivision.
Location: 1550 East 81st Avenue
Zoning: C-3, Highway Commercial
Case #: Z19E7-0515

Mr. Pettit made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Hardaway. There was no discussion. The motion was approved by a unanimous voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Pettit commended Chief Yerga, Fire Inspector Phil Topar, Ms. Gregor, as well as all the building inspectors that were involved in shutting down the Deluxe Inn due to multiple violations. Some discussion followed.

Mr. Pettit has been hearing that there is a solicitor claiming a cheaper rate as a waste hauler. Mr. Pettit reminded residents that we are under contract with Waste Management. Mr. Guernsey asked to council to review the current solicitor’s ordinance and update it with much needed changes. Discussion followed.

NEW BUSINESS: None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

All public comment is recorded on an audio file and kept on file in the Clerk-Treasurer’s Office at Town Hall.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Abandoned Blighted Properties Commission meeting, June 24, 2015 at 11:00 a.m.
Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, June 24, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
Court Truancy Graduation, July 1, 2015 at 5:00 p.m.
Town Hall Closed, July 3, 2015 in observance of Independence Day.
Stormwater Management Board meeting, July 7, 2015 at 4:30 p.m.
RDC meeting, July 7, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.
Plan Commission Workshop, July 7, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
Police Commission meeting, July 10, 2015 at 8:00 a.m.
Town Council meeting, July 14, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Hardaway and seconded by Mrs. Barron.